



# **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

Date: Wednesday, 6 December 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

This is a **Supplementary Agenda** containing additional information about the business of the meeting that was not available when the agenda was published

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## **Membership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

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### **Councillors –**

Reid (Chair), N Ali, Alijah, Amin, Bano, Bell, Fletcher, Gartside, Hewitson, Judge, Lovecy, Ludford, Marsh, McHale, Muse, Nunney, Sadler and Sharif Mahamed

### **Co-opted Members -**

Mr G Cleworth, Miss S Iltaf, Ms K McDaid, Canon Susie Mapledoram, Mrs J Miles, Ms L Smith and Mr Yacob Yonis

## Supplementary Agenda

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6. **A progress update on Childcare Sufficiency 2023 and the Early Years Capital Programme** 5 - 14  
Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

Local authorities are required by legislation to secure sufficient childcare, as far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment and for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children). They are also required to shape and support the development of flexible and sustainable childcare which is responsive to the needs of the community. Childcare provision in Manchester continues to be of an extremely high quality and there are currently no settings judged to be inadequate in the City.

Manchester's Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023 reveals that there are sufficient places to meet current demand, but pressure is likely to build in response to the expanded entitlements launching in 2024. This is being carefully monitored and plans are being developed to respond to potential demand.

This report also includes a summary of progress to date on the capital investment made in the city council's Early Years estate.

7. **Post-16 Education Employment Training Strategic Plan 2022-25 - Progress Update** 15 - 28  
Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

This report provides an update on work done by the Council which has had a positive impact on increasing the number of young people accessing Education Employment Training (EET) opportunities in the city over the last 2 years. It also outlines the plans for this work moving forward which align with Our Manchester Forward to 2025 Strategy and Manchester Inclusion Strategy 2022-25.

The report outlines how the cohort of young people post 16 is set to increase year on year which is causing significant pressure on places across the post 16 sector. Plans are in place to expand existing provision and to open new provisions however, there is no planned growth of places for technical courses. Projected continued growth of the post 16 cohort in the next few years as well as the planned reform of level 2 technical education may adversely impact on the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training going forward.

## Further Information

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For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

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This supplementary agenda was issued on **Thursday, 30 November 2023** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension (Library Walk Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 6 December 2023

**Subject:** A progress update on Childcare Sufficiency 2023 and the Early Years Capital programme

**Report of:** Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

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### Summary

Local authorities are required by legislation to secure sufficient childcare, as far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment and for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children). They are also required to shape and support the development of flexible and sustainable childcare which is responsive to the needs of the community. Childcare provision in Manchester continues to be of an extremely high quality and there are currently no settings judged to be inadequate in the City.

Manchester's Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023 reveals that there are sufficient places to meet current demand, but pressure is likely to build in response to the expanded entitlements launching in 2024. This is being carefully monitored and plans are being developed to respond to potential demand.

This report also includes a summary of progress to date on the capital investment made in the city council's Early Years estate.

### Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- Consider and comment upon the update provided in this report.
  - Review and note the outcomes of the Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023
  - Review and note the progress made on the capital investment into Manchester City Council (MCC) early years sites containing daycare.
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### Wards Affected: All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</b>	Improvements to the estate are contributing to the City's carbon neutral targets both directly through improvements to infrastructure and indirectly using contractors from the City's minor works framework who have made carbon neutral pledges.
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the</b>	Commitments to improve the sustainability of childcare and early learning settings (including

<p><b>issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</b></p>	<p>those on City Council premises) serve to benefit all families who are resident in the City but particularly those from Black, Minority and Ethnic communities and families with a child with a disability who often experience the most disadvantage in the childcare market. Strategies to support the sustainability of early learning and childcare opportunities will safeguard valuable and inclusive provision. Much of Manchester's childcare provision, and particularly MCC tendered provision, is located within deprived wards and support both children and families living locally and those travelling into the City for employment and training.</p>
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<p><b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b></p>
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>Childcare and early learning is essential to enable families to access employment opportunities.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>In addition to enabling parents/carers to access employment and training, this strategy will help ensure that children are equipped with the skills they need when they start school.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>Childcare provision, especially MCC tendered daycare, provides opportunities to access local support when needed.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>Investment in the Early Years estate will reduce carbon emissions and improve the efficiency of buildings from which childcare and early learning opportunities are delivered.</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>Childcare is a vital component of the foundational economy. MCC contracted daycare supports local communities to access childcare where they need it. Strategies to support sustainable childcare will enable residents to participate in the City's thriving economy.</p>

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

## Financial Consequences – Revenue

Funding has been allocated to Manchester City Council (MCC) to roll out the Wraparound Childcare programme between September 2024 and September 2026. Costed delivery plans will be submitted to the DfE (Department for Education) to monitor expenditure and performance outcomes.

Alongside this the Dedicated Schools Grant funds 2–4-year-old free entitlement places, funding rates for which are expected to increase. The free entitlement funding is expanding to support a wider cohort of children from April 2024 onwards. To further support early years and childcare sufficiency, the Council is looking to review its daycare leases.

Under the terms of the current day care leases, costs of shared sites are fully absorbed by the daycare provider, and this has proved unsustainable. Different models are being considered to maximise premises and address revenue pressures.

## Financial Consequences – Capital

20 Early Years sites across 2 capital phases have received City Council investment of £5m over a 2-year programme. Extended works have been necessary at some Phase 1 sites, but these have been met within the risk allocation for each programme.

In addition to this, a capital award from the DfE is expected in coming weeks for the delivery of the Wraparound Childcare Programme which is likely to benefit primary schools, the out of school sector and early years providers.

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### Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Report to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Executive Early Years – Tendered Day-care settings  
Manchester's Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The quality of provision in the City continues to be high with 95% of Manchester settings and 93% of childminders judged to be Good or Outstanding by OfSTED. In addition, there are currently no settings judged to be Inadequate in the City. Despite the financial pressures faced by many settings, they continue to deliver high quality care and education to the children of Manchester.
- 1.2 For ease of reference this report is split into two halves; the first (from section to section 5.1) provides a summary of Manchester's Childcare Sufficiency Report for 2023, the second (from section 6 to section 10.2) summarises the capital investment being made in the Early Years estate containing daycare.
- 1.3 Manchester's Childcare Sufficiency report 2023 reveals that there is sufficient early education and childcare provision for pre-school aged children in Manchester when settings are operating at, or close to, their maximum registered places. Wards showing an undersupply of places are often bordered by wards which are oversupplied. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, demand for childcare has changed with families working differently to share childcare responsibilities. This is coupled with a fall in the 0-4 population of 7% since 2017/18. Daycare providers are operating in a turbulent economic period which has led to some nursery closures and changes to the market.
- 1.4 The report finds sufficient childcare to respond to the first phase of the newly announced expanded childcare scheme for 2 year olds in working households although assessments will be ongoing as to whether there is sufficient provision to support the extensions of the scheme planned for September 2024 and September 2025.
- 1.5 Significant progress has been made on delivering capital improvements to Early Years buildings within the City Council estate containing tendered early education and childcare. Lease reviews have commenced but require further investigation and assessment before firm agreements can be reached.

## **2.0 The Early Years National Context**

- 2.1 Childcare affordability is of national concern and is often cited as a barrier to parents/carers looking to access work. Government funding rates have not increased in line with the costs incurred by daycare providers, meaning that operating margins are tight and salaries in the sector are not competitive enough to retain qualified staff.
- 2.2 The DfE has consulted with the sector, with LAs (local authorities) and stakeholders on the factors affecting quality and sustainability. MCC submitted evidence to the March 2023 Education Select Committee Inquiry into childcare affordability and early education citing the challenges faced in the city to secure high quality, sustainable childcare, and early learning opportunities for those that need them. In its Spring budget statement, the Government announced;



- An expansion to the 15-hour childcare offer for working parents which will see the entitlement available to children from 9 months to 2 years of age.
- Investment into the development of self-sustaining Wraparound Childcare to support the parents/carers of primary school aged children to access employment.
- A supplementary grant to LAs enabling them to top up childcare funding rates between September 2023 – March 2024.
- Consultation on changes to the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) and childcare funding rates from 2024.

### 3.0 Sufficiency of childcare and early learning opportunities in Manchester

- 3.1 Data shows that there is currently sufficient early education and childcare provision for pre-school aged children in Manchester when settings are operating at, or close to, their maximum registered places. However, since many nurseries are operating at around 80% place capacity due to staffing issues, cost of living pressures and inadequate place funding rates, sufficiency is further affected. In addition, settings are frequently working to tighter staff to child ratios in response to the high degree of emerging needs of the children in their care.
- 3.2 When sufficiency is measured using 80% place availability more wards are found to have insufficient childcare. The table below shows the impact on sufficiency of place availability at 100%, 80% and 70% capacity;

Place availability	Insufficient 2-year-old places to meet potential demand	Insufficient 3- & 4-year-old places to meet potential demand
At 100% capacity	Gorton & Abbey Hey, Longsight, Old Moat, Withington, Fallowfield, Woodhouse Park,	Gorton & Abbey Hey, Longsight, Old Moat
At 80% capacity		Moss Side, Brooklands, Burnage, Woodhouse Park
At 70% capacity	Moston	Rusholme, Levenshulme, Didsbury West, Sharston

- 3.3 Strategies are being developed to address insufficiency in these wards including through the issuing of new MCC daycare contracts and working with schools and childminders to expand their provision. Action is also being taken to increase awareness in some communities of the value of early learning to pre-school age children and to encouraging take up of free entitlements to early learning and childcare.

3.4 It is worth noting that families may prefer to access an early education and childcare place in a setting located in a neighbouring ward or in a neighbouring local authority area, wherever is convenient for them.

#### **4.0 New childcare entitlements from April 2024**

4.1 The Government has announced an expanded childcare offer for children aged 2 years from April 2024. The scheme will provide 15 hours of childcare per week for working families, expanding to children from 9 months to 2 years from September 2024 and increasing to a 30 hour offer from September 2025.

4.2 Sufficiency to meet the expanded offer is in the process of being assessed. Data recently provided by Department for Education (DfE) will be compared to locally produced information and consultation is being analysed and used to inform delivery planning to meet the anticipated demand. Initial assessments suggests that citywide, the greatest pressure on places will be felt in September 2025 and work is ongoing with the sector to determine whether it will be able to respond to demand. Over the next 12 months it will become apparent whether additional childcare provision is required in the City to meet emerging demand.

4.3 2024/25 place funding rates will heavily influence the response of the sector to the first phases of implementation in April and September 2024. These are expected to be announced in December 2023.

4.4 Government has also allocated £3m of revenue funding to develop and expand wraparound childcare in Manchester for primary school aged children from working households. The funding will support the development of sustainable provision which is available from 8am and until 6pm on school days within term time. The programme will run between September 2024 and September 2026 by which time wraparound provision is expected to be self-sustaining. There has been no decision yet on how this funding will be used, however, two project officer posts will be created to develop a plan for this funding and support development of new and extended provisions to meet sufficiency requirements. Parents/carers will be encouraged to access government funding to support them with their costs of childcare (including wraparound childcare) such as Tax Free Childcare and Universal Credit.

4.5 Consultation with daycare providers will continue to inform place planning in the City. An initial survey of daycare providers in July 2023 revealed that out of 116 respondents, the majority were preparing to offer more places to children in receipt of the new funding. This will be monitored closely over the next 12 – 18 months as demand for places becomes clearer and new funding rates are released.

4.6 DfE have hosted a series of webinars to outline the expansion proposals and new guidance. They have engaged Hemsalls on a support contract to assist LAs with early years delivery planning and are expected to announce another support contract which includes wraparound childcare. Regular meetings with

the DfE Regional lead and Greater Manchester LAs will help to shape delivery plans and offer opportunities for sharing good practice.

## **5.0 Provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

- 5.1 The full assessment of childcare sufficiency for children with additional needs and disabilities is ongoing. The suitability of a childcare place may be more dependent upon the child's specific needs. Following the roll out of Dingley's Promise Inclusive Practice Training in March 2023, more than 530 members of the early years' workforce including childminders, nurseries, schools, and local authority teams have improved their knowledge of inclusive practice. However, it continues to be the case that children with additional needs are likely to find it harder to access childcare and further work is needed to fully respond to this challenge. A task and finish group has been established to address the issue of childcare sufficiency for children with SEND.

## **6.0 Capital improvements to the Early Years estate**

- 6.1 Capital works to address health and safety and statutory compliance concerns on Early Years buildings providing childcare has progressed through 2023. Buildings were prioritised according to childcare sufficiency and the priority of works required at each site. Capital works were split into two phases; Phase 1 which commenced in 2022 and contained 11 sites, Phase 2 which will commence before the end 2023 and contains 9 buildings. To date, capital works have been managed within the budget allocated.

### **6.2 Phase 1 update**

- 6.3 Capital works have been completed at 8 out of 11 sites in Phase 1. The works planned for the nursery in Debdale Park are planned to commence at the end of November 2023. Works to two nursery buildings have been delayed because it has been found that they have required more extensive schemes of work. Roof repairs were halted at Old Moat Children's Centre (CC) when it was found that the programme of works would not be sufficient to address the scale of the disrepair. Following thorough reassessment and pending the issue of contracts, a full roof replacement will be carried out commencing in February 2024.
- 6.4 In addition, works on Boxgrove CC have been delayed until such time as alternative premises can be made available to the daycare tenant. This is necessary because of the scale of the roof repairs required which includes the removal of asbestos materials. Cheetham Park CC was identified as a suitable alternative location for the daycare, but it has required some capital investments to prepare the building for temporary occupation. These are expected to be completed in December 2023.

### **7.0 Phase 2 update**

- 7.1 Sites for inclusion in Phase 2 were identified in early 2023 following a similar protocol as for Phase 1. This resulted in 9 sites being identified and progressed through the necessary capital stages. Phase 2 capital works are not as extensive as those included in Phase 1 and encompass, but are not limited to, the testing and, where applicable, replacement of electrical systems (e.g. Fire alarm and emergency lighting), testing of mechanical systems and upgrade of building related items at some premises.
- 7.2 Capital works' specifications for Phase 2 sites were submitted to contractors on the minor works framework in August 2023. Although there were delays of between 4 and 6 weeks for contractors providing target cost, the majority of these have been checked and verified and contracts have been progressed. The first works to Phase 2 sites are planned to commence in December 2023.

## **8.0 Additional developments to the Early Years estate**

- 8.1 A suite of Fire Risk Assessments and Asbestos Management Surveys have been completed on Early Years sites as required. Action has been taken to address any immediate, high-level concerns and where possible to include any points requiring action in Phase 2 capital works' specifications. In addition, all management actions are being communicated to the site tenants for them to address within specified deadlines.
- 8.2 Energy Performance assessments were commissioned and commenced in October 2023. The majority have been completed and certificates are being provided. It is expected that Phase 1 capital works will have had a positive impact on EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) ratings. Decarbonisation bids have been submitted for six Early Years buildings. If successful, 2 sites will benefit from lighting improvements and 6 will receive decarbonisation improvements including upgrades of heating systems. The sites are in Gorton, Old Moat, Sharston, Cheetham and Clayton.
- 8.3 Since September 2023, all buildings within the EYs estate have been assessed for RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) by Internal Audit and Corporate Estates.

## **9.0 Lease Reviews**

- 9.1 Work is ongoing to renegotiate lease arrangements with daycare tenants. Following detailed assessment of the agreements in place, dialogue with several tenants and thorough financial modelling, progress is being made on proposals to find equitable ways to let daycare space within EYs buildings.

## **10.0 Conclusion**

- 10.1 Phase 2 of the Early Years capital programme to address priority capital works commenced in early 2023, with the first works due to start in December 2023. The scope of works required is less significant and intrusive than Phase 1 (hence the reason that they are in Phase 2) and as a result the timeframes for

each site are likely to be shorter than those within Phase 1. Delays have been experienced at a small number of Phase 1 sites, but the required action has been taken to ensure that the works continue to progress. Additional investment in the estate has been made to ensure compliance with health and safety and fire risk management requirements, to understand energy performance and to assess for RAAC.

- 10.2 The City has sufficient childcare to meet its current early years duties and is working towards ensuring that there is sufficient childcare to meet the extended entitlements launching in April 2024 and particularly for Sept 2025. There will be a concerted effort to increase wraparound childcare for working families between 2024 and 2026 and a renewed focus on improving access to childcare and early learning for children with SEND. Quality in the City remains high, but the sector continues to face sustainability challenges because of increased overheads and financial pressures.

## **11.0 Recommendations**

- 11.1 The Children's Young People and Overview Scrutiny Committee are recommended to:

- Consider and comment upon the update provided in this report.
- Review and note the outcomes of the Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023.
- Review and note the progress made on the capital investment into MCC early years sites containing daycare.

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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 6 December 2023

**Subject:** Post-16 Education Employment Training Strategic Plan 2022-25 – Progress Update

**Report of:** Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

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### Summary

This report provides an update on work done by the Council which has had a positive impact on increasing the number of young people accessing Education Employment Training (EET) opportunities in the city over the last 2 years. It also outlines the plans for this work moving forward which align with Our Manchester Forward to 2025 Strategy and Manchester Inclusion Strategy 2022-25.

The report outlines how the cohort of young people post 16 is set to increase year on year which is causing significant pressure on places across the post 16 sector. Plans are in place to expand existing provision and to open new provisions however, there is no planned growth of places for technical courses. Projected continued growth of the post 16 cohort in the next few years as well as the planned reform of level 2 technical education may adversely impact on the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training going forward.

### Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:-

- (1) Read and consider the progress of the Post-16 EET Strategic Plan 2022-25 recognising the impact in relation to the approach to support young people into a Post-16 destination.
  - (2) Consider and explore challenges in responding to creating sufficient places as a result of the growing population.
  - (3) Recommend any aspects of consideration, amendment or clarification.
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### Wards Affected: All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	The Post-16 EET Strategic Plan includes within workstream 4, alignment with the Education Green Climate Action Plan 2022-24. As such, relevant impact is measured through the existing KPI's of this specific plan.
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in	This Post-16 EET Strategic Plan is applicable to all young people of secondary and college age and their settings' with a specific reference to

meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	vulnerable groups as part of workstream 3 and the education sector at large as part of workstream 4.
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<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The reduction of the number of young people within the raising participation age who are not in education, employment or training.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Implementation of robust quality assurance frameworks for post-16.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Inter-agency collaboration and partnership working to focus on identified intervention for vulnerable young people.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Supporting the post-16 education sector in reducing carbon emissions and developing sustainable school and college environments that provide opportunities for young people to benefit from the green economy.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Embedding social value / Our Year and its opportunities with education, employment and training.

### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

N/A

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### **Background Documents (available for public inspection):**

Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025  
 Work & Skills Strategy  
 Manchester Inclusion Strategy



Our Manchester Youth Strategy  
Marmott Review

## **1.0 Background/Context**

- 1.1 From September 2013 the Department for Education (DfE) raised the participation age (RPA). This means that all young people are required to be enrolled in some form of accredited education or training until at least their 18th birthday, with the Council having the statutory duty for this. This can include full-time college courses, apprenticeships, traineeships, study programmes, supported internships and volunteering combined with part-time study.
- 1.2 In fulfilling this duty, the Council provides support to schools and post-16 education, training and engagement providers to ensure our young people make a successful post-16 transition to a destination of their choice.
- 1.3 Career Connect were awarded the NEET Prevention & Reduction Service contract in April 2023 and are commissioned to deliver this service until March 31st 2025. This contract includes providing direct support to young people.
- 1.4 The Post-16 EET Strategic Plan 2022-2025 details five identified workstreams as the key priorities. This provides an over-arching view of the opportunities, pathways and outcomes for young people in Manchester who are of raising participation age (RPA) and provides a consistent focus for partnership working that aligns to the broader strategic aims of the city.

## **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 Manchester has a strong post-16 sector in Manchester, where the vast majority of education providers are judged by Ofsted to be good or better and where young people and their families have choice. The post 16 sector including academic, technical and vocational providers work as a partnership and are highly committed to working with the City Council.
- 2.2 The Post-16 EET Strategic Plan 2022-25 was developed in partnership with the sector and is aimed at supporting the sector in maximising the opportunities available to young people in transition from pre-16 compulsory education on to the next stage of their pathway to further education, training and/or employment. The strategic plan focuses on a three-year period to coincide with the Our Manchester Forward to 2025 Strategy; the Manchester Inclusion Strategy 2022-25 and the Work & Skills Strategy 2022-27, with identified workstreams that align with the city's strategic objectives.
- 2.3 These workstreams are:
  - Education, Employment and Skills
  - Quality Assurance
  - Support for Vulnerable Young People
  - Social Value
- 2.4 Career Connect were awarded the NEET Prevention & Reduction Service contract in April 2023 and continue their offer in the city as the Council's

commissioned service, for NEET young people aged 16 to 18 (up to 25 for SEND and care leavers). The service offers support to young people in relation to engagement with education, training and employment opportunities; tracking of young people whose destination is not known; outreach and community-based delivery; support for young people at risk of becoming NEET upon leaving school. As well as operating a city-wide service, the service also has co-located staff with partners and agencies including:

- Youth Justice
- Manchester Secondary Pupil Referral Unit
- Care Leaver Service
- Endeavour Federation
- EHCP Team

There are also specific linked advisors to the following teams:

- Virtual School
- Attendance & Exclusions
- Social Care (this is pending within the UKSPF structure)

### **3.0 Progress to date**

This section of the report describes the landscape of the post-16 sector in Manchester, the previous year's achievements and the priorities in year 2 of the EET Strategic Plan 2022-25. Specific examples of actions and projects can be found in Appendix 1.

#### **3.1 Young people not in Education, Employment or Training**

- 3.1.1 It is pleasing to note that Manchester and its partners have supported young people through the two-year post-pandemic period, ensuring that the number and rate of NEET and unknown has not been exacerbated.
- 3.1.2 The efforts of the Council and of stakeholders is clear in NEET data from the previous academic year. In July 2023, the number of young people who were NEET unknown was 137 (1.0%). This is significantly lower than July 2021 which was submitted at 408 (3.4%). In comparison, the number of NEET known was 568 (4.2%). This is slightly higher than July 2021 where it was submitted at 484 (4.0%). Overall, the combined NEET known, and unknown figures were 705 (5.2%) in July 2022, which is a reduction from 892 (7.4%) in July 2021. This, in relation to performance against national figures, Statistical Neighbours, Core Cities and Greater Manchester, is best evidenced in the table below:



attendance, care experienced young people, those with SEND and those with English as an additional language (EAL), which will be a key feature of the UKSPF program.

## **3.2 Post-16 Provision**

- 3.2.1 Manchester is now home to around 35% more people than at the turn of the millennium. This rise in population has resulted in a significant increase in demand for primary and secondary education places in the city since 2008 and these larger cohorts of children are now reaching the end of their education in school. To put into context that has resulted in the City opening 8 new secondary schools with 2 more planned plus expansions of most of our existing secondary schools in recent years. This growth is impacting upon post-16 providers of education and training with the sector informing the Local Authority that they are experiencing high demand for places with most currently at capacity.
- 3.2.2 A post-16 Sufficiency Report, commissioned by the Local Authority 2 years ago, provided a 10-year outlook on the potential impact of this growth coming through the secondary sector in the City, on the existing post 16 sector and the Council's capacity to meet our statutory duty to provide sufficient opportunities for young people post 16. The report stated that the post 16 cohort is set to peak around the end of this decade and will be 20-30% larger than it is now. It recommended that the Council work with its 16-18 provider base, DfE and other stakeholders (including those in neighbouring boroughs) to increase the supply of post-16 places.
- 3.2.3 It is noted that monthly tracking systems detect a fluidity in the cohort volume due to residents moving into and out of the City. That said, when comparing the cohort volume between the 2022/23 academic year and 2021/22 academic year, Manchester saw an increase of 803 in the 16 – 17 year old cohort. This population is set to grow fastest in the north of the city although the majority of Manchester's post-16 academic education provision, is concentrated in the south central part of the city.
- 3.2.4 Many young people travel within Greater Manchester for their post-16 education and given the quality of provision and facilities in Manchester, we are a net importer of young people which further increases the demand for places. Some of Manchester's young people travel to provision in nearby boroughs and given that their population increases are a few years behind ours, this has provided some capacity. However, neighbouring authorities are likely to experience increased demand from their own areas in future years. The implementation of GM's Our Pass has supported young people post 16 to travel to access the right course for them and this has meant that disadvantaged young people have access to a wide range of options post 16.
- 3.2.5 Whilst there has been growth in the sector, with the addition of Didsbury High School Sixth Form and growth at Connell Co-op College and Access Creative College, as noted in the Post-16 Sufficiency Report, all other partners are restricted by a lack of space and funding to manage growth in their offer.

3.2.6 The Council has been in dialogue with the DfE as well as the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to raise this issue. In September 2022 the DfE launched a capital funding round for post 16 education providers linked to growth in demand. In addition, the DfE opened a further round of free school applications which included 6th form provision. In recognition of the evidence and the case Manchester made for additional post 16 places, the DfE awarded the highest points for need for all Manchester colleges that bid. As a result of the post 16 capital funding bids and the free school round additional provision has been secured as follows:

- Loreto and Xavarian Colleges successfully bid for £4m each to expand their provision. Both colleges are investing significantly more of their own funding than the match funding required. The DfE capital is conditional on the buildings being completed by Sept 2024 which is challenging. However, planning applications have been approved for both.
- DfE approved the opening of a new 6<sup>th</sup> form free school provided by Dixons Academy Trust to be located in Wythenshawe. There is not yet a site allocated for this.

3.2.7 However, there has not been a clear or financially viable route for increasing places for technical post 16 provision alongside our academic offer. This means that there is continued and growing pressure on access to technical courses in the City.

### **3.3 The Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI)**

3.3.1 In 2019, the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) was introduced to high schools, including the Pupil Referral Unit, special schools and alternative providers, to identify Year 11 learners most at risk of becoming NEET. This enabled schools to provide additional support and interventions to ensure their students at risk of becoming NEET had a secure and appropriate post-16 destination and the additional support to make a successful transition into further education, training or work.

3.3.2 In February 2023, out of a total cohort of 6285 Year 11s, 579 young people were assessed as being high risk with multiple risk indicators and 667 medium risk with one risk indicator. This represents 19.8% of the overall cohort as being at risk and broadly inline with a four-year period.

3.3.3 The table below provides a breakdown of the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) cohorts for 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 leavers. Please note that the cohort total does not include those who were educated or home or not registered in education and is reflective only of the children on the school roll at that time.

School Leavers	Year 11 Cohort	RONI High Risk	RONI Medium Risk	RONI Total	%
2023	6285	579	667	1246	19.8%
2022	6460	607	685	1292	20.0%
2021	5816	566	607	1173	20.2%
2020	5611	472	550	1022	18.2%

3.3.4 To provide earlier intervention and support for schools and young people, it was agreed that following the successful NEET Prevention Panel pilot in 2021/22 which was co-designed with schools, this would continue into 2022/23 and be extended to begin earlier in the academic year. Schools were invited to discuss the most significantly high-risk young people from their cohort with a panel of statutory officers from relevant teams, and Career Connect. This led to over 13% of the RONI cohort specifically targeted for intervention and support in partnership with statutory services, Career Connect and/or external support agencies.

**Number of YP discussed:** 162

**% of total RONI cohort:** 13%

**North:** 64 YP

**South:** 85 YP

**Central:** 13 YP

3.3.5 November data indicates that of these most at risk young people, 73.5% are now in EET, which compares similarly to the pilot project outcomes despite scaling up the program. This will now be further developing into a third year, with more schools engaging as the project has progressed.

### 3.4 Qualification Reform

3.4.1 As T-levels are rolled out, equivalent BTEC qualification will be phased out across the 2024-25 and 2025-2026 academic years. Currently, at the Manchester College, over 47% of students study a BTEC or T-level at level 3. Students need good GCSEs including English and Maths to complete a T-level. The change to qualifications will impact on the pathways of Level 2 students particularly those without the academic requirements to undertake a T-level.

3.4.2 There are 4 pathways being developed for post-16 technical pathways at level 2, and the specifications are not yet available or understood. Depending on the routes available and chosen by young people, there is a risk that fewer young people will achieve L3 qualifications and more will become NEET at 17. Once the specifications are available, there is a need to enhance career guidance for young people and schools.

3.4.3 Furthermore, the numbers of young people completing T levels are small compared to other technical qualifications – 124 achieved a T level in 23/24 and as new T-levels are rolled out, it will take a number of years to build them up. The proposed withdrawal of level 2 qualifications in these vocational

subjects will potentially leave a gap in onward qualification for a significant number of young people post 16.

- 3.4.4 There have been a few recent other policy announcements from the Government about the future of post 16 education including that young people continue to study Maths until 18; increasing hours of study and most recently the development of an Advanced British Standard which would replace both T levels and A levels and would increase the number of subjects young people study post 16. The latter will be developed over a ten-year time frame and we will need to see more detail before we can determine our position and its implications for young people in Manchester.

#### **4.0 Business Engagement & Skills for Life**

- 4.1 Many Manchester employers currently offer schools and colleges a range of support such as:
- Work experience placements;
  - Employee involvement in careers education, information, advice and guidance, including involvement in activities to broaden young people's understanding of the world of work.
  - Strategic support such as becoming a Governor.
- 4.2 With the government's reforms to technical education and skills there will be an increasing need for schools and colleges to work in partnership with employers, careers advisers, local authorities and other education and training providers to support students to prepare for the workplace and to make informed choices about their next step in education or training. Furthermore, there is evidence that a strong career curriculum, embedded within the wider curriculum and with links to work-related activity and experiences, can be one factor amongst others in preventing NEET; in supporting personal and employability skill development; inspiring and raising aspiration; enhancing CVs and college/university/job applications; raising attainment and engagement; increasing student satisfaction and addressing equity and disadvantage
- 4.3 Following engagement with business leaders in the City who would like to do more work with our schools and some of our school leaders, the Council is planning to pilot a brokerage process which will match the offers from the business sector to our schools with the aim of enabling schools and businesses to develop longer term strategic relationships.
- 4.4 This work will link to Manchester's Skills for Life approach, which was launched in November 2019 and was developed in response to young people consistently voting for a curriculum for life as their top priority in the annual Make Your Mark survey. The approach was coproduced with young people, school leaders and in consultation with business leads and it was piloted in a number of schools across the City. The concept changed from a 'curriculum' to identifying the common set of key skills for life that young people required



for adulthood and which employers also identified as young people needing to be successful in the workplace.

The 5 skills are:

- Problem solving
- Communication
- Self belief
- Self management
- Team working

4.5 Often young people do not recognise the skills that they have acquired and are not always able to articulate or demonstrate these well to employers. This common framework based on an agreed set of Skills for Life will be used to set standards and outcomes for work experience opportunities and employer encounters.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

5.1 Following from the success seen in 2021/22, 2022/23 was another positive year for Manchester in relation to its NEET figures, with consistent improvements from previous years, and therefore more young people finding their pathway and remaining engaged throughout the course of the year. Those that required additional support, were able to do so via the Council's commissioned service, Career Connect, and we saw an increase in training/engagement provision on offer. The Post-16 Pathway Partnership has become more embedded and the collaboration with invested partners, keen to work together and with the Local Authority continues to increase opportunities and pathways for young people into employment.

5.2 2023/24 has started in relative positive manner. Our September data indicates a reduction to 19.3% from 22.4% for the comparative period of the last academic year, and that we continue to focus on bringing this figure down quickly to maximise resource for those most in need of support. This is a significant achievement given the continued, above projected, increase in the volume of post-16 young people in the city compared to the previous academic year and we have a further opportunity to shape intervention and support through UKSPF moving forward.

5.3 Challenges remain, specifically with regards to sufficiency, and whilst the Council continues to work closely with our partners, with the DfE and GMCA to create places, this remains an area of risk as the population increase rises as projected in the 2022 Post-16 Sufficiency Report and more young people seek to study in Manchester whilst living in neighbouring boroughs.

5.4 In addition, challenges also remain with the ongoing reform of Post-16 education qualifications and the adapted offer across the city – additionally impacted by this being felt across Greater Manchester and the North-West region.

- 5.4 Nevertheless, we are confident that through the development and implementation of this revised and ambitious EET Strategic Plan 2022/25; revisions to the NEET Prevention & Reduction Service with Career Connect, UKSPF investment and further enhancing of the Post-16 Partnership with schools and Post-16 settings, we can continue to build from the momentum created and show further impact in relation to increasing the number of young people in EET.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:-

1. Read and consider the progress of the Post-16 EET Strategic Plan 2022-25 recognising the impact in relation to the approach to support young people into a Post-16 destination.
2. Consider and explore challenges in responding to creating sufficient places as a result of the growing population.
3. Recommend any aspects of consideration, amendment or clarification.

## Appendix

### Post-16 EET Strategic Action Plan 2022-25 - Example of focused actions

**Workstream 1 Education, Employment and Skills - embedding** a culture of pathways for all in post-16, linking opportunities to NEET reduction and prevention, labour market intelligence and wider MCC strategic priorities and plans supporting the raising participation age statutory responsibility.

Example of action – Completing a competitive bidding process and implementing a revised NEET Prevention & Reduction Service from April 2023 - March 2025; supporting growth in provision through the DfE's capital funding program and successful pilot of Wythenshawe Pathway's Program.

**Workstream 2 Quality Assurance - implementing** a quality assurance methodology of Post-16 sufficiency of provision, Skills for Life and career, employability, information and advice as well as understanding of the quality and extending the scope of influence and advice for settings working with young people to become work-ready.

Example of action – supporting schools and colleges in completion of the Inspiring IAG Award – the national quality standard for careers advice; implementing the Post-16 Youth Voice Framework following a successful pilot project in 2022/23; delivery of cross-sector CPD with 180 colleagues attending tailored workshops on identified common themes of interest and hosting a series of issue-based task & finish groups leading to the co-design of guiding principles for youth voice, skills for life and transition, as well as the Manchester Transition Timeline.

**Workstream 3 Support for Vulnerable Young People - establishing** intervention frameworks for and with settings for all young people, with specific reference to those identified as being vulnerable and requiring additional support.

Example of action – Enhanced NEET Prevention Panel off across schools and Post-16 settings; development and implementation of the UKSPF program and ongoing implementation of the targeted 'Enhance the Chance' program spanning two academic years for identified young people in Year 10 through the enhanced RONI process.

**Workstream 4 Social Value - ensuring** that opportunities for young people moving into post-16 settings connect with employers, organisations and partners are maximised through the MCC social value focus.

Example of action – Ongoing development of the local authority's role in supporting the brokerage of relationships between education and employers; partnering opportunities in the North of the city with local education settings and providing a conduit link between the UNICEF CYP program and Post-16 young people and settings.

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